
II. *A curious Fact in the Natural History of the Common Mole, Talpa europæa, Linn. By Arthur Bruce, Esq. Secretary to the Natural History Society of Edinburgh.*

Read June 2, 1793.

THAT the mole does, in common with other quadrupeds and man, possess that spirit of curiosity which prompts to emigration and even to transmarine expeditions, I found out last summer from the best authenticated facts.

In visiting the Loch of Clunie, which I often did, I observed in it a small island at the distance of 180 yards from the nearest land, measured to be so upon the ice. Upon the island, Lord Airly, the proprietor, has a castle and small shrubbery. I observed frequently the appearance of fresh mole-casts, or hills. I for some time took it to be the water-mouse, and one day asked the gardener if it was so? No, he said, it was the mole; and that he had caught one or two lately. But that five or six years ago he had caught two in traps; and for two years after this he had observed none. But about four years ago, coming ashore in a summer's evening in the dusk, the 4th or 5th of June, 10 o'clock P. M. he and another respectable person, Lord Airly's butler, saw at a small distance upon the smooth water some animal paddling to, and not far distant from the island. They soon, too soon! closed with this feeble passenger, and found it to be our common mole, led by a most
astonishing

astonishing instinct from the nearest point of land (the castie hill) to take possession of this desert island. It was at this time for about the space of two years quite free from any subterraneous inhabitant; but the mole has for more than a year past made its appearance again, and its operations I was witness to.

In the history of this animal I do not at present recollect any fact so striking; especially when we consider the great depth of the water, both in summer and winter—from six to ten, fifteen, and some places as deep as thirty or forty feet, all round the island.

Edinburgh,
April 26, 1793.